



The Grange

ISSUE 96

WINTER 2005

CHAIR'S REPORT

CATHY STROUD, CHAIR, THE GRANGE

It is fun to romanticize the past but as I write this we are in a very cold snap and I am happy to live in the 21st century with central heating and electricity! We have a great deal of work in the months ahead particularly as the date that we have to be out of the House is now May 1st.

AGO Director Matthew Teitelbaum has agreed to be our Guest Speaker at the AGM on April 11th. We intend this AGM to be a bit of a last Hoorah as we will not be open again until the AGO has completed the transformation in 2008.

Preface Theatre Company's performances of *The Bear* got excellent reviews. Using the Music Room is part of a new trend in the use of historic spaces. Does this mean that Wm Henry was a visionary or that the old adage everything old is new again is true? Jack Carr should also be credited with returning this practice to The Grange.

We did get one comment about the 10am setting in the house. This visitor liked seeing the house in a dif-

ferent way. With our restricted timeline though we won't be doing the 10am setting this time around. The House Committee who does the room settings is very busy with the inventory and there is no time for changing rooms again in April.

Have you ever wondered what a campanologist was, is, or does? You will find out in this issue (see page 4).

We also have photos of the December 15th event with several of our volunteers in costumes made by Sarah Walker and Diane Reid (Sun). There is also a special tribute to our friend and colleague Marie Baggot who passed away November 29th 2004. We miss her.

We plan to issue one more Grange Newsletter in the spring when we have more info about what is happening with The Grange for the next 3 years then.

Enjoy

Cathy

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**The Grange
Volunteer Executive
2004-2005**

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Helvi Hunter

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Jane Heinemann

HISTORIC KITCHEN

Michelle Abrams

MODERN KITCHEN

Elvira Putrus

COSTUME

Nancy Lofft

DAY CAPTAINS

Monday	Jane Heinemann
Tuesday	Elvira Putrus
Wed.Day	MaryLou Zingrone
Wed.Bridge	Helvi Hunter
Wed.Eve	Marg McGuigan
Thursday	June O'Brien
Friday	Virginia Mladen
Saturday	Linda Ness Richard Seto
Sunday	Edna Rigby

SITE CO-ORDINATOR

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Marie Baggot

If you happened to be in The Grange's 1817 kitchen around 3:30pm Wednesday afternoons you would be certain to hear a cheery hello. It was Marie Baggot arriving for her bridge shift. Invariably she had just been to Cultures in the gallery for a coffee. She and Helvi Hunter, her Day Captain often met there for coffee before coming to their shift. Wednesday shifts found Marie acting as "door-man". She would greet visitors with a "Good Afternoon" always maintaining the position of a servant of the 1830's in Upper Canada. This was not her only shift at The Grange. Every other Sunday morning Marie would be in the 1817 kitchen. She would have a fire glowing in the hearth, Grange bread would be put on a plate ready for visitors to taste and she would be there to answer visitors' questions about 'below stairs'. When we needed to ask volunteers for extra duties Marie was always willing. Many Mondays when the house was open for March Break Marie was there to help. Likewise with her experience as a paymaster she was a perfect choice to collect the money at our Training Dinners. During Members Shopping Week, when Grangers dressed in Costume to serve shortbread Marie was the first to offer her time. In the less busy hours at The Grange Marie loved to talk about her 2 grandchildren and what exciting things were happening in their lives.

The Grange was not her only AGO volunteer placement. Marie started as a Meeter and Greeter during the Phase III construction at the gallery and in addition to her regular Thursday shift she helped with every exhibit from the Barnes to the Hermitage: Beyond the Myth. Marie was also a champion. She won the jitterbug contest at the AGO winter party! I am sure she must have had lucky horseshoes in her purse that year because she also won the 50/50 draw.

Marie was so energetic that the AGO wasn't the only place she volunteered. She was actively involved with the Scarborough Village Seniors and every May participated in the Senior Games. In 2003 she won the gold for bowling (a very successful year for Marie!) and was also the recipient of the Scarborough Senior Volunteer of the Year Award.

When I spoke to Marie at the end of last August she talked about how much she missed the AGO and thought about returning in the fall. She said she would start at her Sunday Grange shift because then if she felt a little tired she could still talk to visitors but do it from the rocking chair in the 1817 kitchen. Marie passed away on November 29th of 2004. Our deepest sympathies are with the family.

Everyone who knew Marie talks about what a genuinely wonderful lady she was. We have lost our friend and we still miss her.

Cathy

CO-ORDINATOR'S CORNER

by Jenny Rieger

I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday and I wish you all the best for 2005. This year will be a time of change for The Grange. We got off to a great start with the production of Chekhov's play, *The Bear*. Set in the nineteenth century this comedy tells the story an enraged creditor who falls spontaneously and passionately in love with his debtor's young widow as she vehemently refuses to pay her dead husband's debt. Performances took place in the music room from Wednesday January 12-22 at 2:00 with additional performances at 7:30 on Wednesdays.

From now until May, the Monday group and I will be preparing the house for closure. As you are probably all aware, The Grange will close to the public April 17th and to everyone May 1st and will remain closed until the AGO reopens in the fall of 2008. This is both because of the position of the crane and because the work in the Atrium will prevent access. Staff and Volunteer Resources are preparing a plan for supporting AGO volunteers during construction with special awareness of the situation of Grange volunteers. We will have a plan in place of how we will manage this transition by February. I will share it with you then. In the meantime, any ideas and suggestions are always welcome. Some that have come in involve keeping social connections through get-togethers, maintaining the newsletter, and having lectures.

As part of the preparation for construction, The Grange artifacts and furniture will be packed and stored on site. The Monday group will be helping with inventory and organization, a moving firm will do the packing. We will also need some other groups to help box the library books, organize costumes for the move, and help keep track of everything! I will post notices closer to the time.

Times of change can be difficult for everyone. Difficulty with communication, uncertainty about what is happening and questions about the future add to feelings of discomfort. Please feel free to discuss any concerns, ask any questions or raise any issues with Cathy, Barbara Carson or me. Information about the transformation is on the AGO web and there will be staff and volunteer meetings every other month to give updates.

Jenny Rieger

Volunteer Dates & Notices

Enrichment Dinners

February 14th
March 14th

Important Dates April 17th

Last day the Grange will be open to the Public

May 1st

Last day for anyone to be allowed in the house

Grange AGM

April 11th
Guest speaker
Matthew Teitelbaum

**Jack Carr
Scandal at the Grange**
ongoing
dates t.b.a



The costumes were made by Sarah Walker and Diane Reid. The dresses were modeled during the Victorian Carollers Christmas Concert in the Grange on December 15th 2004. Pictured at left: Judith Dacosta (Wed) in a dress from 1875. Pictured at left: Judith Dacosta (Wed), Mary Cormack (Fri), Virginia Mladen (Fri), Diane Reid (Sun), Alena Nesbitt (Sun) and Debbitt Saul (Sun).

IRONS

By Avril Stringer

Grange volunteers and visitors may have noticed some changes in the kitchens. We now have a ironing table in the 1840 kitchen. On this table are the handles to the usual flat or "sad" irons, (sad means heavy) the irons themselves are on the stove.

One new item has been added, a strange looking iron with a "chimney" This was known as a chimney iron or charcoal iron. In addition to the chimney the iron had a cavity in the body into which hot coals or hot charcoal could be placed.

This would seem to be an improvement over constantly changing irons between the ironing table and the stove as one iron cooled and had to be replaced by a heated one.

However, there were certain drawbacks to the chimney iron described by David de Haan in Antique Household Gadgets and Appliances "To raise the temperature the maid had to insert a pair of bellows into a hole in the back of the iron and pump madly. However, it had the disarming knack of sending a shower of soot and ashes out of the chimney at the front all over the freshly washed clothes." Hardly an ideal arrangement.

There were however, other alternatives in the mid 19th century. One was the "box" iron. This too had a cavity in the base but here the cavity was filled with a heat-

ed block or cylinder. David de Haan also describes this type of iron, (c. 1851). This "was a hollow metal box with a lift-up door in the back. A slug of cast iron a little smaller but approximately the same shape as the box was put in the fire grate until it glowed red hot, and then taken out with tongs and slipped into the iron. These were in use throughout the 19th century."¹

The flat iron would seem to be the least hazardous of these methods, requiring only the careful fitting of the handle and lifting the hot iron from the stove. However, even here all was not as it seemed. The surface of the iron that was heated on the regular or cook stove often had to be cleaned before use. The lucky laundry maid had a special laundry stove on which to heat water and her irons, these then stayed clean. This would have made her job a little less arduous but still not a job to envy.

Avril Stringer, Research Chair

¹ Betty Myers an Art Rental volunteer, told me her mother had one of these box irons, which she used during W.W. 11. Betty feels this was her mother's way of conserving electricity.



28 Chimney iron and box-irons

A Toronto Ghost?

Here at The Grange we are often asked if the House has a ghost. There are stories, of course, but that's all they are, stories. It seems, however, that Toronto does have at least one ghost.

According to a little booklet, Historic Toronto, published in 1953 by the then Toronto Civic Historical Committee, the spirit is that of a man named Muller who was the first keeper of the first lighthouse on the Great Lakes built 1798-1808. Muller was known to keep a supply of beer and as the story goes, one night in 1815 three soldiers decided they should share it. A quarrel erupted and Mr. Muller was allegedly beaten to death. Certainly, he was never seen after that night. The soldiers also disappeared.

It is said that the footsteps of the old man can be heard climbing the stairs to the light.

Visitor Trivia

On a Saturday in the fall a man came into The Grange and entered into a conversation with Sue Robins. He was very interested in our bells in the 1840 kitchen. He said he was a campanologist.

What is a campanologist?

This is a person who studies bell ringing and casting.